

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the pending application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars.

1. In the drawings

Fig. 5B is amended on the replacement sheet by the addition of the arrow at the end of the leader for reference character 34.

Entry of the amendment to Fig. 5B is respectfully requested in the next Office communication.

2. In the specification

Amendments to the specification are shown in the "Amendment to the Specification." It is submitted that the amendments to the specification find clear support in the drawings as originally filed. Thus, no new matter is introduced by way of the amendment to the specification.

Aside from minor corrections of informalities, the specification is amended to more clearly describe the outer wall of the bladder. For example, page 3, line 24 and page 6, line 25, are each amended to describe the material of the outer wall as "preventing" outward radial distension of the bladder. Consistent with this amendment, page 9 is amended between lines 16 and 17 to describe the outer wall as generally retaining its shape both before and after the compartments are pressurized. Support for these amendments is clearly found in Figs. 5A – 5D which show various stages of the inflation of the compartments, yet the outer wall of the bladder remaining constant.

In addition, the specification is amended on page 6, line 16 and page 10, line 8, to describe the casting area as being defined by the inner walls as "generally conical." Support for this amendment is clearly found in Figs. 5A – Fig. 6C.

Lastly, the specification is amended on page 10, lines 24-30 to correct prosthesis socket "S" to "5" so as to be consistent with Fig. 7.

Entry of the amendment to the specification is respectfully requested, and an indication of such entry is requested in the next Office communication.

3. In the claims

Claims 1 and 5 are currently amended to recite that the interior casting area is "generally conical." Support for this amendment is provided above in reference to the specification and the drawings.

Claims 1 and 5 are also amended to recite that the inner walls are extendable "only" radially inwardly towards the casting area. Of course, support for this amendment is found by way of the description of the outer wall as limiting extension outwardly of the wall (page 6, lines 20-25). Also, clear support for this amendment is found in Figs. 5A-5D wherein it is shown the chambers 44 as expanding radially inwardly into the casting area.

New claim 8 recites the subject matter of original claims 1 and 3. The subject matter of original claim 3 is slightly modified to recite that the "distension limiting structure prevents radially outward distension of the bladder to thereby maintain the outer periphery constant when the chambers are in both expanded and non-expanded conditions." Support for this amendment is clearly found in the specification and in the drawings in Figs. 5A-6C.

Acknowledgment of entry of the claims is respectfully requested in the next Office communication.

4. Rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,885,509 ("*Kristinsson*") in view of U.S. patent 5,108,456 ("*Coonan*")

Reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-7 as being unpatentable over *Kristinsson* and *Coonan* is respectfully requested in view of the amendment to

independent claims 1 and 5. It is submitted that independent claims 1 and 5 are clearly patentable over the prior art of record. Claims 2-4 are patentable based on their dependency from claim 1 and their individually recited features. Claims 6 and 7 are patentable based on their dependency from claim 5.

In view of amended claims 1 and 5, it is readily evident upon a review of *Kristinsson* and *Coonan* that neither of these patents disclose or suggest a prosthesis socket direct casting device including an annular bladder having an interior casting area with a generally conical profile. *Kristinsson* discloses an apparatus for forming a prosthetic socket that is generally cylindrical. *Coonan*, on the other hand, also shows a prosthetic socket that has an interior area that is generally cylindrical. Neither *Kristinsson* nor *Coonan* hint at providing an interior casting area having a generally conical profile.

As discussed in the specification of the pending application on page 12, lines 3-7, the feature of the generally conical interior casting area of the claims is advantageous in that it provides a non-cylindrical pattern that more closely follows the anatomical contours of a typical residuum.

Also, amended claims 1 and 5 recite the patentable feature that the inner walls of the chambers are extendable only radially inwardly towards the casting area. In observing Fig. 6 of *Kristinsson*, the bladder 28 extends both radially inwardly and radially outwardly. *Kristinsson* does not teach, however, configuring the bladder to extend only inwardly.

Coonan does not overcome the shortcoming of *Kristinsson* since it is clear from Figs. 4-6 that the bladders 18 of *Coonan* extend radially outwardly towards the prosthesis member 10. In fact, according to the embodiments of Figs. 5 and 6 of *Coonan*, the bladders 18, 18' are either positioned on the exterior or near the exterior wall of the socket member 14.

There is no suggestion in either *Kristinsson* or *Coonan* of configuring a prosthesis socket direct casting device having multiple compression chambers that are

extensible only radially inwardly towards a casting area. Moreover, there is no evidence from *Kristinsson* or *Coonan* that it would be desirable to configure a bladder having multiple chambers only inwardly towards a casting area. As such, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to modify the device of *Kristinsson* in the manner required by the pending claims.

According to the pending application, the configuration and orientation of the chambers is particularly advantageous since they provide desired pressure distribution over the prosthesis socket material being molded to a residuum to thereby ensure a proper fit of the molded and hardened socket on the residuum with little or no adjustment required by the prosthetist (page 3, lines 11-15).

In view of the collective shortcomings of *Kristinsson* and *Coonan*, it is readily evident that the combination of these patents does not amount to a case of prima facie obviousness. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

5. Conclusion

As a result of the amendment to the claims, and further in view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that every pending claim in the present application be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the applicants' attorney, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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